

Public Engagement Report

Davisburg Mill Pond Dam

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Executive Summary

Background

Springfield Township and Oakland County have extensively explored options for the Davisburg Mill Pond Dam. Due to the age of the dam and based on information from a 2011 engineering study and 2015 video inspection, the Mill Pond Dam has significant deficiencies and associated safety/liability issues.

A feasibility study was commissioned in October 2018 to identify various alternatives for the dam. The study included two public informational meetings, held in March and May of 2019, to present preliminary findings and receive public input. The Feasibility Study resulted in eight viable alternatives in two scenarios to either replace or remove the dam. During a Special Meeting held on June 6, 2019, the Springfield Township Board carefully analyzed every alternative based upon several factors including historical significance, effect on safety, water wells, and real estate values, recreational benefits, environmental considerations, and cost. The Township Board ultimately recommended dam removal and restoration of the river corridor. The County concurred in that recommendation.



In the fall of 2019, the project moved to the preliminary engineering and conceptual park design phase. The consultant has collected data to determine how to engineer the stream channel and arch culvert at the Davisburg Road crossing and has prepared plans for the restoration of the river corridor. Concurrently, the consultant is offering recommendations for future enhancement to the surrounding park properties.

The Oakland County Parks & Recreation Commission, Springfield Township Board, and Springfield Township Park Commission reviewed the preliminary engineering plans and conceptual park designs at their meetings in October 2020 and approved presenting the plans to the public for review and comment.

Public review of engineering plans and park conceptual designs

A public outreach meeting with a presentation was planned on January 19, 2021. Unfortunately, the meeting was hacked and had to shut down. Due to the incident, it was determined that the best way to share the preliminary engineering and park concepts was through a recorded presentation. The video provided on the website¹ is approximately 45 minutes long and can be viewed at any time.

In place of the planned Q & A portion of the Outreach Meeting, several methods to submit comments and questions were offered through February 11:

- Survey online or a paper survey provided at the Library
- Email comments
- Voice message on a dedicated phone line
- Written comments mailed or hand-delivered to the Supervisor's office

The public engagement survey was conducted from December 27, 2020 to February 11, 2021. The survey asked 7 questions (See Appendix B), including an opportunity for open comment. 110 surveys were collected in total: 108 online and 2 paper surveys. In addition, 5 emailed comments and one letter was received. These are attached to the report.

¹ https://www.springfield-twp.us/our_community/mill_pond_dam/index.php

Survey Results

The first four questions asked how often people visited Mill Pond Park and Rotary Park and why they visited. Nearly half of respondents (44%) visited Mill Pond Park at least once a month. Only 15% person of respondents indicated they visited Rotary Park at least once a month, with a majority saying they did not visit Rotary Park. Nature, trails and the Hart Community Center were the top reasons to visit Mill Pond Park. Out of the people who said they visited Rotary Park, the top reasons were walking on the way to somewhere else and taking photographs.

Nearly three quarters of the survey respondents were from the Davisburg project area. Another 23% live in adjacent communities.

Survey respondents were provided with a list of features and improvements that are a part of the project plan and were asked to rate the importance of each item. The results show that natural resources and pedestrian connectivity and accessibility are highly valued. Among more active types of recreation, play structures ranked the highest.

The optional open comment section provided an opportunity for respondents to provide more nuanced input into the project. A total of 49 comments were received including survey respondents, emails, and mailed comments. 20 people provided overall positive comments in support of the project. 10 people indicated they preferred keeping the pond and repairing the dam preferable to the current project. Some of the other topics identified in comments included people wanting to see more trail and water trail connectivity, concerns and suggestions about long-term management, the environment, fiscal management, traffic issues, and the types of recreation offered.

Figure A: Rendering of the Mill Pond Dam removal and restoration

Conceptual View of Stream Culvert and Trail Crossing

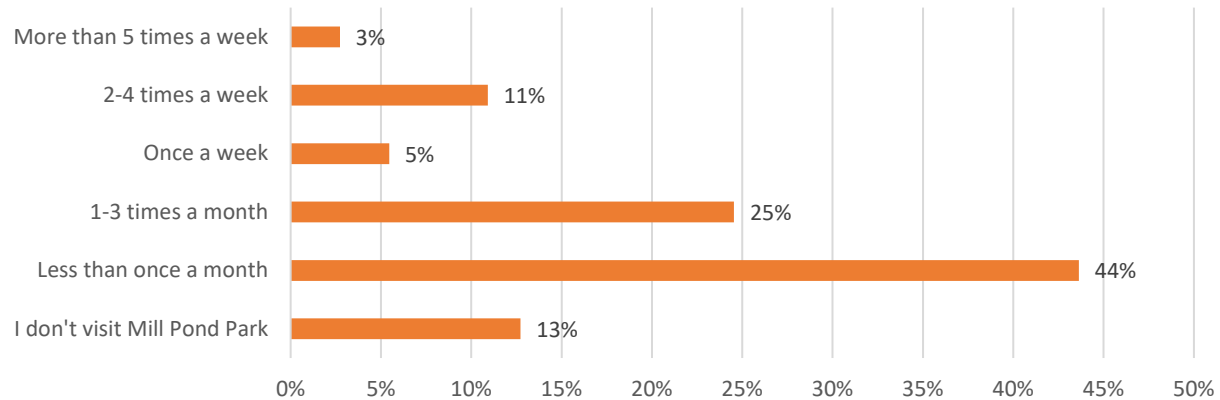


Mill Pond Dam Removal and Restoration

In the past 12 months, how often have you visited Mill Pond Park?

This question was mandatory, with 110 responses. 14 persons (13% of respondents) indicated they did not visit Mill Pond Park.

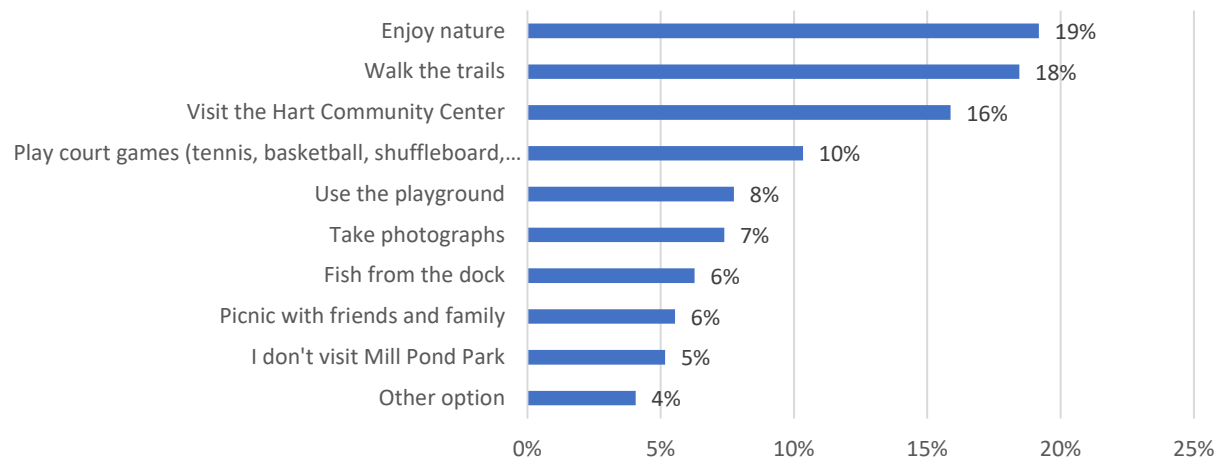
Figure B: Number of visits to Mill Pond Park in past 12 months



What are the reasons you visit Mill Pond Park?

108 people responded to this question. Multiple responses were allowed; a total of 271 items were selected. The top 3 selections were: Enjoy nature, Walk the trails, and Visit the Hart Community Center. 14 persons indicated they did not visit Mill Pond Park.

Figure C: Reasons to visit Mill Pond Park



11 persons (4% of selections) indicated other options:

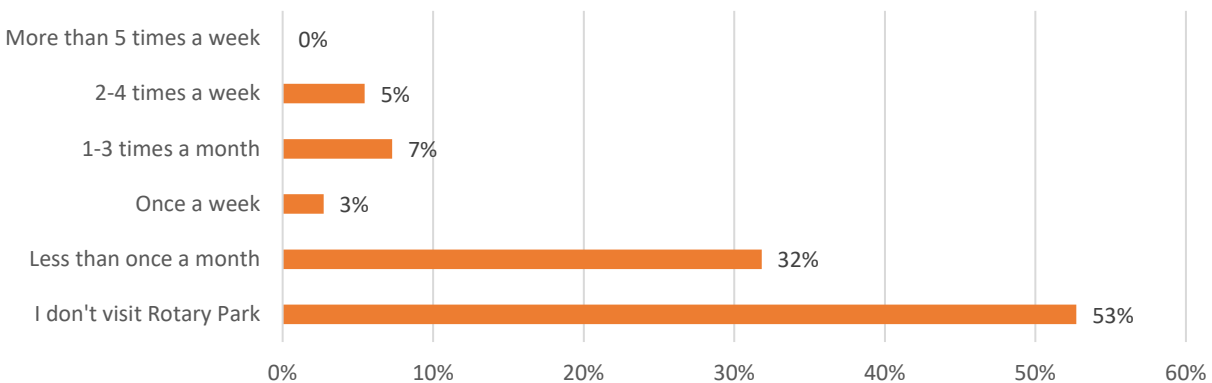
- Information on the progress on the project
- Kayak
- Used to like to swim there too
- Ice fishing on the pond (2 respondents)
- Turn around in the parking lot
- I would like to have pathways and a more pleasant access to river edge

- Just moved to Davisburg - exploring amenities
- its been years since I swam there, became too marshy. many other local options for recreation with much larger acreage. Davisburg is too small to focus any additional expense on park amenity projects other than restoring the waters back to what they once were
- Parks & Rec events (This and the previous question aren't fair for use assessment in this covid period. I'm answering pre- covid!)
- Tennis courts only

In the past 12 months, how often have you visited Rotary Park?

This question was mandatory, with 110 responses. 58 persons (53% of respondents) indicated they did not visit Rotary Park.

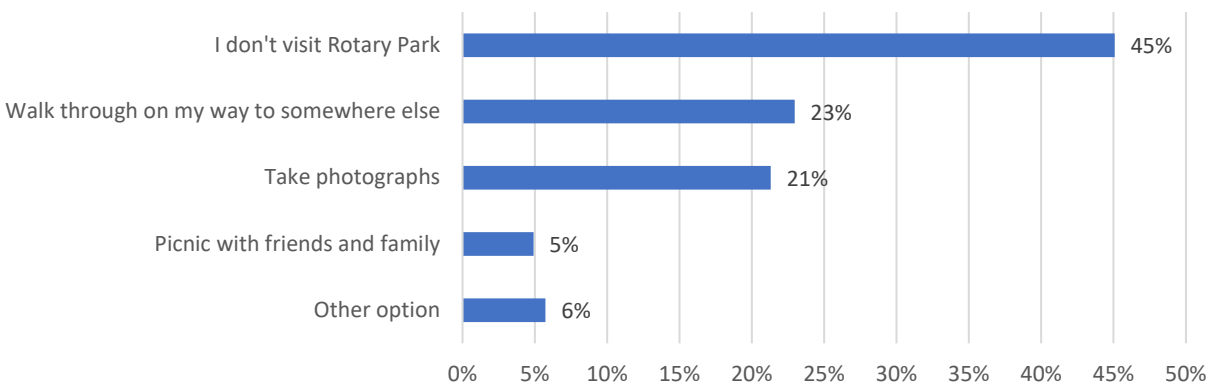
Figure D: Number of visits to Rotary Park in past 12 months



What are the reasons you visit Rotary Park?

102 people responded to this question. Multiple responses were allowed; a total of 121 items were selected. The top 3 selections were: "I don't visit Rotary Park", "Walk through on my way to somewhere else", and "Take photographs". 55 persons indicated they did not visit Mill Pond Park.

Figure E: Reasons to visit Rotary Park



7 persons (7% of selections) indicated other options:

- Doesn't have curb appeal

- Enjoy the little waterway
- enjoy the sound of the water cascading on the “Falls”; the water wheel...
- visit waterfall
- again, years since ive visited. ground was always very soggy.
- Enjoy nature, view the dam and river
- Dog walks

What is your home zip code?

Response to this question was required. Out of 110 responses, all Zip Codes were valid. 95% of the Zip Codes (105 respondents) were from the project area or adjacent areas (Davisburg, Clarkston and Holly).

Table 1: Residence of survey respondents

City or Village	County	State	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents	Zip Codes
Davisburg	Oakland	MI	80	73%	48340
Clarkston	Oakland	MI	20	18%	43846 & 48348
Holly	Oakland	MI	5	5%	48442
Farmington	Oakland	MI	1	1%	48331
Lake Orion	Oakland	MI	1	1%	48359
Novi	Oakland	MI	1	1%	48374
Whitehall	Muskegon	MI	1	1%	49461
Hagerstown	Wayne	IN	1	1%	47346
			110	100%	

Importance rating and ranking of features and improvements

These six questions asked respondents to rank the importance (Very Important, Important, Somewhat Important, and Not Important) in six categories:

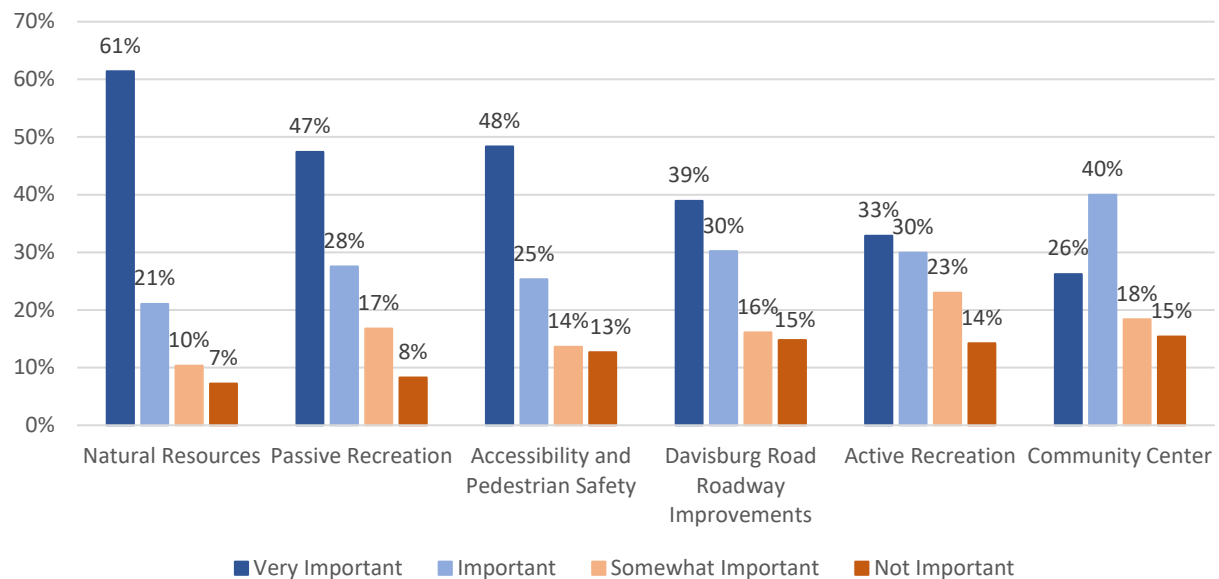
6. Natural Resources (100 responses; 91% of total respondents)
 - Shiawassee River returned to its natural state
 - Restored stream corridor with native plantings
 - Improved habitat for native wildlife species
7. Passive Recreation (105 responses; 95% of total respondents)
 - Pathways, trails and boardwalks
 - Access to the water
 - Nature viewing platforms
 - Benches
 - Pavilion and picnic sites
 - Interpretive signage about history and nature
8. Accessibility and Pedestrian Safety (105 responses; 95% of total respondents)
 - Pathways that accommodate strollers, wheelchairs and other mobility devices
 - Pedestrian passage through the culvert, under Davisburg Road
 - Pathway connection from Mill Pond Park to the Civic Center
9. Active Recreation (106 responses; 96% of total respondents)
 - Basketball court

- Tennis courts
 - Pickleball courts
 - Shuffleboard courts
 - Playground equipment
 - Swing sets
10. Davisburg Road Roadway Improvements (103 responses; 94% of total respondents)
- Widened shoulders on roadway over culvert
 - Curbing on roadway in project area
 - Decorative roadway lighting
11. Community Center (105 responses; 95% of total respondents)
- Windows / door walls to provide scenic views
 - Patio or deck overlooking stream corridor
 - Expanded indoor gathering space

Both the categories of features and improvements and the individual items are shown in the two figures below as a percentage of total responses. The ratings are weighted (Very Important = 4, Important = 3, Somewhat Important = 2, and Not Important = 1) and averaged to arrive at a ranking. The figures are shown in ranked order.

In the figure below, the “Natural Resources” category ranked highest, followed by “Passive Recreation” and “Accessibility and Pedestrian Safety”

Figure F: Categories of features and improvements ranked by the weighted average ratings

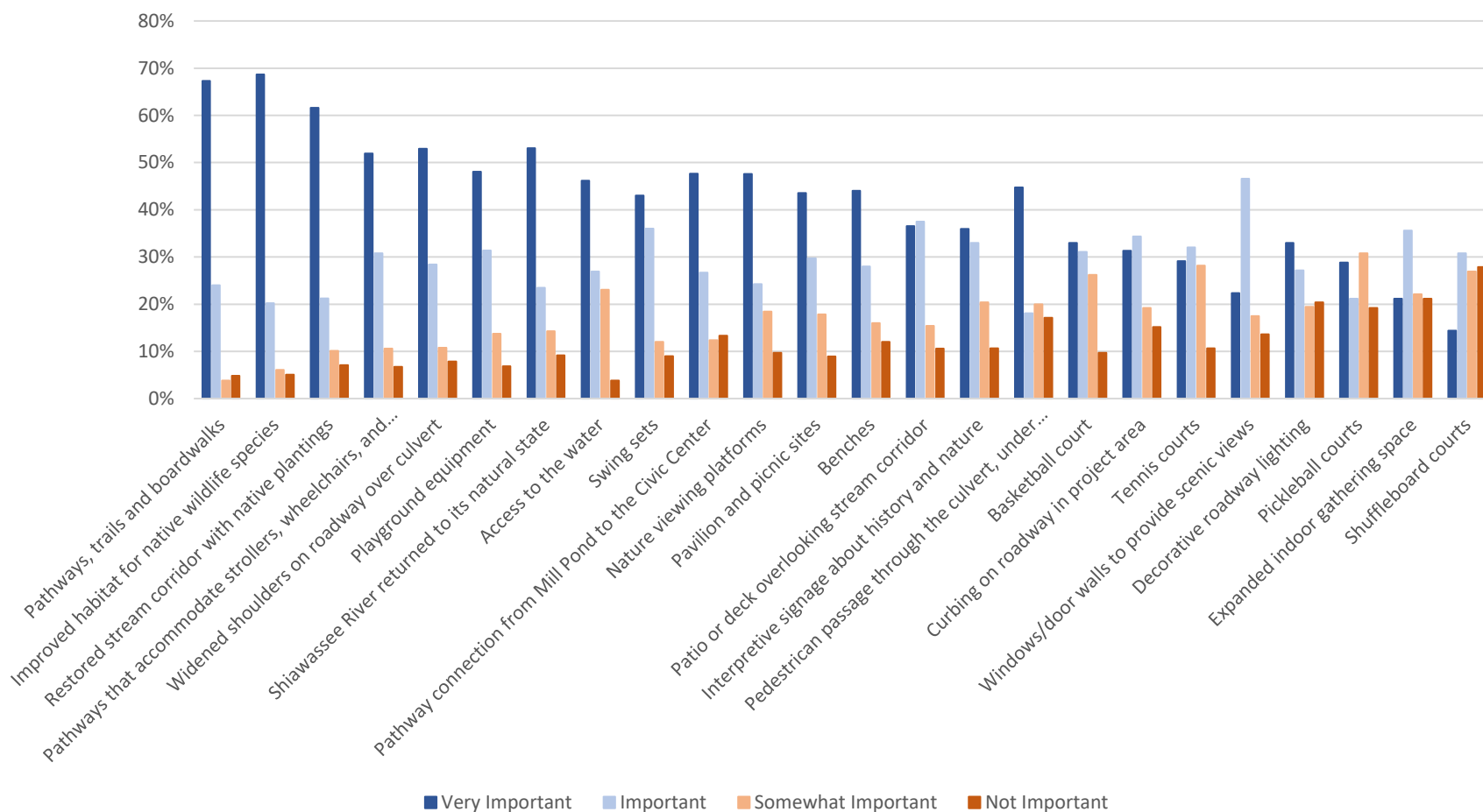


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The figure below shows all the individual items ranked by their weighted average ratings. The top three selections are Pathways, trail and boardwalks; Improved habitat for native wildlife species; and Restored stream corridor with native plantings.

Figure G: Individual features and improvements ranked by the weighted average ratings



Open Comments

49 comments of varying length and complexity were received. 39% of survey respondents (43 out of 110 total respondents) provided additional comment. 5 comments were received by email and one comment was received by mail. The table below shows number of comments that were identified in each category.

Table 2: Summary comment analysis by topic

Topic		Survey Respondents	Email or Mailed Comments	Total Comments
Supportive of Project	20 people expressed overall support for the project. Several also provided additional suggestions or had questions under one of the other topics.	17	3	20
Keep Pond or Dam	10 people indicated they preferred to retain the pond and/or repair the dam. Some individuals also provided additional suggestions or had questions under one of the other topics.	7	3	10
Fiscal Concerns	Four people expressed concerns and questions about project costs and use of public funds.	1	3	4
Management and Environmental Concerns	11 people had concerns about the long-term management of the area including invasive species control, habitat for wildlife, sediment in the Shiawassee River, and potential toxicity and contamination.	8	3	11
More Connectivity	Seven people indicated they would like to see greater connectivity with regional trails, other recreational areas, and village centers.	7	0	7
Recreation Concerns	Six people expressed specific recreational needs, such as pickleball and kayak access.	5	1	6
Traffic Concerns	Four people had concerns about traffic during or after the project.	2	2	4
Other Comment or Question	Seven people had comments not included in these selected topics, such as restroom availability, events hosting, making design compatible with local architecture, preservation of the water wheel, and noting that they had no comment.	7	1	9

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Table 3: Analysis of individual comments by topic

Supportive of Project	Keep Pond or Dam	Fiscal Concerns	Management & Environmental Concerns	More Connectivity	Recreation Concerns	Traffic Concerns	Other Comment or Question	Comment Text
		1			1			1. Is the pickleball court necessary? Could those funds be utilized for expanding the trails further or making other improvements? Is it possible to connect to Springfield Oaks?
					1			2. Pickleball courts would be a great addition to the community.
	1							3. Leave the Dam in place
1								4. Thank you for your time on working on this much needed project!
1			1					5. I live on Ratalee lk rd and I'm pleased the dam is being eliminated. Before it fails and takes out Davisburg rd. one rainy night. I also hope this results in some improvements to the water troubles in Downtown basements. Taking the survey makes it clear you are attempting to plant native vegetation which hopefully means there is a plan to prevent/combat phragmites. It would be a shame to see them get another toe hold in the river.
1								6. As you can tell by my responses, I really enjoy all of the ideas presented and view them as very important. Although I do not have small children now, I used to enjoy going for walks to the rotary park and mill pond and use the play structure and tennis courts. Having designated paths and providing a safe crossing to the other side of Davisburg road will be very beneficial for young families. While I mourn the loss of the beach we once had, I believe the new design that is proposed will be a big improvement. Thank you.
1								7. I think that this is a very important project given its location near a village center and for seniors and children to enjoy and respite.
1			1	1				8. I drive thru daily and simply would like to see the area returned to its original state. I'm not supportive of chemicals being used nor misinformation being distributed about rattlesnakes. If it is natural

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Supportive of Project	Keep Pond or Dam	Fiscal Concerns	Management & Environmental Concerns	More Connectivity	Recreation Concerns	Traffic Concerns	Other Comment or Question	Comment Text
								to an improved environment, then so be it. If the library to the Hart Community Center were connected by bike trails, it encourages our community to get out and move to stay healthy.
	1							9. KEEP THE POND! That has been a treasure!
							1	10. It would be nice if the water wheel could be kept somehow.
				1				11. I would be more supportive of the project if the proposed mill pond trail connected to the Shiawassee Basin Preserve Trailhead or had future plans to do so and/or if the railroad culvert was large enough for kayak passage.
			1					12. My concern is that, while the stated goal is to return the riverbed to its natural state, this project is not going to accomplish that. A little research on the subject shows that, since well before any human habitation and well into the colonization of the area by europeans, the Shiawassee river was a mix of slow moving wandering streams separated by thousands of beaver dams and their associated ponds. History tells us that many of the current dams on our river systems simply replaced the pre-existing beaver dams that had occupied those sites for hundreds of years. The only way to preserve the bio-system that is being created here will be to institute an active and ongoing beaver eradication program along the entire corridor controlled by the township or they will simply replace the dam we're removing and add more as they deem necessary for their comfort and survival. To simplify, we'll be creating an ecosystem that never existed in the river's history and then artificially maintaining it in perpetuity. It seems that we never learn the simplest lesson regarding our manipulation of the natural environment around us. The least management is the best management.

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Supportive of Project	Keep Pond or Dam	Fiscal Concerns	Management & Environmental Concerns	More Connectivity	Recreation Concerns	Traffic Concerns	Other Comment or Question	Comment Text
					1			13. Please keep an area to fish and all the different outside activities for families such as basketball, shuffleboard, horseshoes and volleyball. It is such a fun family outside area.
1								14. We'd like to see Spr Twp brought into THIS century Thanks
						1		15. Please more sidewalks up and down Broadway. More pedestrian flashing signs and children at play. Too many cars have been speeding when speed limit sign is 25 mph. Special pedestrian sidewalk going over train tracks. Lots of people walk to the parks and not enough sidewalks or trails.
	1							16. Yes I would like to see the Mill Pond Stay, Just fix what needs to be fixed.. We will lose the Ice fishing... you say you want to return it to it's natural state, but after almost 200 years that is it's natural state.
	1							17. Save the mill pond !!!
1								18. Looking forward to a renewed and returned state of the beautiful Shiawasee
1								19. The proposed newly designed stream corridor would give a reason to visit Mill Pond and Rotary Park such as walking, picnics, appreciating nature. The pathway that runs along the river to downtown Davisburg and possibly the Civic Center would allow another option for walking (other than the wonderful current park options) and provide key destinations for gathering, shopping, leisure (library). Thank you for proposing this exciting opportunity!
	1		1					20. Why take the pond a way? area is spring feed. Pond feature part of community. Stream will carry sediments down stream without dam. golf course chemical run off goes into pond and settles vs running to lake Huron. Utilizing the golf course area better location than current project proposal. Seems like the reason to take the dam out is so a access road can be built. Access to Golf Course is

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Supportive of Project	Keep Pond or Dam	Fiscal Concerns	Management & Environmental Concerns	More Connectivity	Recreation Concerns	Traffic Concerns	Other Comment or Question	Comment Text
								ready now. Lets use the golf course area for project and leave pond alone.
	1							21. Pond is a beautiful social asset that has bonded the community for generations. Fix the Dam.
1			1					22. Remove the dam, install culvert, nature will find the path for the stream.
1								23. Returning the river to its natural state, and to a river-walk focal center for the hamlet of Davisburg, represents a wonderful best chance to revitalize the little hamlet, connect it to its surrounding amenities and attractions, and to emphasize and celebrate the rare and beautiful natural resources that already attract so many to our area. Our natural resources are recognized as Springfield Township's best assets — so why not put them front and center?!
				1				24. Bike path to somewhere... It would be great to connect our community to others in the area... Clarkston to the east, Holly to the west.
1				1				25. Anything that makes the entire Shiawassee Corridor more amenable to kayaking is what I'm most interested in! Thanks for your hard work!
1							1	26. I feel the aesthetics of the bridge and all other hard scapes and pavilion structures should be constructed in a fashion that honors the historic nature of downtown Davisburg. Natural stone veneers and stout timber frame structures in a traditional style would help give or keep that invaluable architectural image. THANK YOU!
						1		27. Homeowners on Eaton Rd will be impacted with excess traffic during construction. Eaton Rd should be improved prior to this project beginning to accept traffic.

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Supportive of Project	Keep Pond or Dam	Fiscal Concerns	Management & Environmental Concerns	More Connectivity	Recreation Concerns	Traffic Concerns	Other Comment or Question	Comment Text
							1	28. Make hart center and MPP a showpiece and attractive for event hosting
	1							29. My rankings are largely based only on superficial knowledge of the project. I was counting on becoming better informed via the Zoom meeting which, of course, ended prematurely. I moved in last September and have not had the luxury of truly getting to know the area. But I am nonetheless very disappointed that the pond will become only a memory. My initial reaction is that a more vibrant downtown - and its and the community's attendant increased tax base - might have provided the funds necessary to repair or replace the dam. I am baffled that Davisburg has not blossomed as its neighbors Holly and Clarkston have. I have casually been told that waste or sewage problems preclude this, but I truly have no factual knowledge on the matter. For what it is worth, I would be happy to provide any additional input I can. Contact information redacted.
1								30. Great plan. There should be a focus on making this a destination park. Include picnic tables, grilling, water access and kayak input and outtake, freesebe play. A walkway along the entire length of the river with stopping points. Make it family oriented. It has potential to be the jewel of the Townships recreation and preservation system. A place to meet and hang out with friends and family for the day
				1				31. Sidewalks from downtown to the parks.
			1					32. please be sure to manage preventative measures for phragmites. many wetlands within the lower half of the state are becoming overgrown with it and the common cattail is beginning to become overtaken. a simple example would be to check around many backroads within the county and neighboring counties along

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Supportive of Project	Keep Pond or Dam	Fiscal Concerns	Management & Environmental Concerns	More Connectivity	Recreation Concerns	Traffic Concerns	Other Comment or Question	Comment Text
								wetlands, cattails are less and less common to see as phragmites is taking control.
							1	33. 24 / 7 restroom accessibility.
							1	34. 24 / 7 restroom accessibility.
				1	1			35. Yes, I would like to know if the river/stream and park will (or could) provide access for kyaks or canoes for recreational water exercise and enjoyment. Something like they have south of Holly. Widened shoulder over culvert for a bicycle lane, but not shouder parking. I would prefer for park to remain a combination of communy activity center, playground and tennis courts as it is now with more focus on nature enjoyment enhancement. An "All Sports park" would be better at the township office area.
			1					36. I visit the parks -- Mill Pond and Rotary -- several times a week during the non-winter months. So I did not answer the how many times per week during the past 12 months question. It can't be answered as currently stated because I haven't visited either park in the last few / winter months. The area between the railroad tracks -- Mill Pond Park and Rotary Park -- need to look a whole lot better than the river channel between Dilley Road and Mill Pond Park. I assume it is township owned property behind the cemetery and Karl Schultz Park, and it looks terrible.
							1	37. I wish there was a way to incorporate the water wheel in the middle of the river. I love coming down and taking pictures. I bring friends down to see it. I think this is why some people are against the plan. Putting a small cascade before the water wheel would make a picturesque place to picnic or just relax.
1				1				38. The new park should allow for a canoe launch and the culvert under the railway expanded to accommodate canoe passage. This way there will be proper parking for canoe and kayak patrons

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Supportive of Project	Keep Pond or Dam	Fiscal Concerns	Management & Environmental Concerns	More Connectivity	Recreation Concerns	Traffic Concerns	Other Comment or Question	Comment Text
								instead of clogging up Eaton road with multiple cars from people launching their boats. The concepts and ideas are great and it is obvious a great deal of time and effort has already been spent trying to restore this area to the way it was more than 100 years ago. We applaud your efforts.
							1	39. Not at this time thank you
1								40. I am pleased with the overall plan and feel that it not only will become more visually pleasing, but will draw more people into the surrounding areas for many recreational opportunities. I think that this plan will be something that the residents can be proud of! I am very supportive of the consideration for native plants, animals and habitats. Great job to the entire team involved in the planning process!
					1			41. We only go to the Mill Pond park to play tennis. We would like to see the new Pickleball courts installed. The Pickleball courts in the Clintonwood park in Independence Township are packed with seniors. Seniors play from April to end of October. They stated with four courts, but 4 courts were not enough and now they have eight courts. In the spring, summer, fall months these courts have been packed. In the Master Plan for Parks and Rec, for the Recreation Programs and Services for Adults, I see a lot of Yoga, meditation, and for the 50+ Active Adults, I see • Trips • Weekly lunches. SO seniors are active too, as you can see by the explosion of Pickleball throughout the United States. I think it is time to give the seniors something too. Young people play also. I see a lot of trail updates, baseball dugout updates, etc in the Master Plan.
1			1					42. I would appreciate having a park that has hard surface pathways and not just mowed trails. I love the idea of letting the river go

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								back to its natural state which in my opinion would mean the Township would not have to pump in chemicals to kill the aquatic invasives.
1								43. Thank you for the in-depth information available on this project
1						1		44. Email 1/28/2021: As much as we like the looks of today's dam and area, it is understandable why it has to change. The presentation was very good and you have a well thought out plan. A big questions and concern to use is how long Davisburg Road will be closed and whether there will be an alternate roadway and if not, why not? (see Appendix B for full text)
	1	1					1	45. Email 1/31/2021: I live on Clark Road, upstream from the dam. I have a pond on my property that drains into a feeder stream. Will I notice any change in my water level, or change in the rate of flow when the dam is removed? Was a special assessment or tax increase to fund the repair of the dam ever considered? (see Appendix B for full text)
1					1			46. Email 2/1/2021: Just reviewed subject Mill Pond Conceptual Master Plan, it looked nice. How do we make sure building the Pickelball courts are prioritized? We already have many walking trails, baseball diamonds and parking lots in Springfield Township but no outdoor Pickelball courts. Please let me know. (see Appendix B for full text)
1			1					47. Email 2/2/2021: Just watched the presentation about the removal of the Mill Pond Dam. It looks like a great solution all around. I'm glad there is such a strong conservation approach and there is special attention being paid to restoring the river habitat for species of special concern. ... (re Blandings turtles) This might have already been addressed by you and your team, but I would like to suggest a few sandy areas be added along the river to give the

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Supportive of Project	Keep Pond or Dam	Fiscal Concerns	Management & Environmental Concerns	More Connectivity	Recreation Concerns	Traffic Concerns	Other Comment or Question	Comment Text
								turtles places to lay their eggs...increasing the areas they can nest in might reduce the danger of road crossings for at least some of them. (see Appendix B for full text)
	1	1	1			1		48. Email 2/12/2021: (see Appendix B for full text)
	1	1	1					49. Letter received 2/9/2021: (see Appendix B for full text)

Appendix A: Full Text of Comments Received by Mail or Email

Email received January 28, 2021 from Clark and Shirley Robbins

As much as we like the looks of today's dam and area, it is understandable why it has to change.
The presentation was very good and you have a well thought out plan.

A big question and concern to us is how long Davisburg Road will be closed and whether there will be an alternate roadway and if not, why not?

Regards and best wishes for a safe and healthy future, Clark & Shirley Robbins

Email received January 31, 2021 from Jeff Bauman

1. I live on Clark Rd, upstream from the dam. I have a pond on my property that drains into a feeder stream. Will I notice any change in my water level, or change in the rate of flow when the dam is removed?

2. Was a special assessment or tax increase to fund the repair of the dam ever considered?

Thank you.

Jeff Bauman

Email received February 1, 2021 from Jim Weibeski

Hi. Just reviewed subject Mill Pond Conceptual Master Plan, it looked nice.

How do we make sure building the Pickelball courts are prioritized?
we already have many walking trails, baseball diamonds and parking lots
in Springfield Township but no outdoor Pickelball courts.

Please let me know.

Thanks in advance,

Jim Weisbeski

Email received February 2, 2021 from Lauren Walsh

Hi, I just watched the presentation about the removal of the Mill Pond Dam. It looks like a great solution all around.

I'm so glad that there is such a strong conservation approach and that there is special attention being paid to restoring the river habitat for species of special concern. That's wonderful!

I live down Andersonville Road and there is a pond in my backyard. I am lucky to watch the wild turtles enjoy the waters all summer long. One of the best parts of this is that we have Blanding's visitors! I have seen three different very large Blanding's turtles over the years and it always makes me happy.

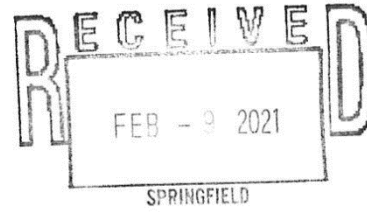
This might have already been addressed by you and your team, but I would like to suggest a few sandy areas be added along the river to give the turtles places to lay their eggs? I've had to help turtles across Andersonville Rd and Davisburg Rd before (even once on the dam itself!) and it would be awesome if they had a few new areas to nest in. I know that won't stop them - they have stubborn minds of their own, ha! - but increasing the areas they can nest in might reduce the danger of road crossings for at least some of them.

Thanks for listening,

*Lauren Walsh

Letter received February 9, 2021 from Dennis Omell

Mill Pond Dam



I am opposed to the Mill Pond Dam Project for the reasons listed below. I have been living in Davisburg since 1972 and I consider the Mill Pond as a beautiful part of Davisburg and residents young and old enjoy fishing there.

I would like to make reference to what happened up north to Sanford Lake, Wixom Lake, Secord Lake and Smallwood Lake after the Dam failure following the rain storm on May 19, 2020. The results aren't pretty and will take several years for recovery.

At the December Park Commission meeting, Ann Loncar made an interesting comment concerning the renewal vote for the Park and Recreation operating millage of .75 mills that expires in 2024. She was worried the residents will blame Parks and Recreation for the dam removal and vote down the millage renewal.

I have spoke with many residents regarding the dam removal and many are opposed and blame Parks and Recreation for supporting the project. This would be a shame if we lost our funding. We have a great staff, hard working and taking pride in their work. I don't think that Springfield Township will be able to replace our \$640,000 year budget. We have a lot of great programs for our residents and it would be a shame if we lost everything.

I'm also concerned about contamination of sediment in the Mill Pond. The Hart Building used to be used as a Oakland County Road Commission garage and they dumped a lot of unknown by products into the Mill Pond. Also, the old gas station and car repair dumped a lot of nasty stuff in the pond. My neighbor worked at the garage for many years and he told me so. My concern for the draining of the Mill Pond would that the disturbance of these toxins would carry downstream and Springfield Township would be held responsible for a massive clean-up.

Sincerely,

Dennis Omell

Springfield Township Parks and Recreation Commissioner

Email received February 12, 2021 from Dennis Strelchuk

Laura,

Due to some unexpected circumstance, I missed the deadline to comment on the presentation and provide questions and concerns. I hope the township can provide the answers to these questions to the taxpayers:

1. How long do you anticipate shutting down Davisburg Road? There are several new businesses that will be opening in the near future and this could put them out of business if the road shutdown extended for a significant period.
2. What portion of the cost will come out of our local taxes and will an assessment be necessary to fund the project.
3. The presentation mentioned that some grant money would be available. What percentage will any of the grants cover in costs. Are there grants available to refurbish the dam and save the pond at a lower cost and less inconvenience?
4. What is the budgeting for removal, installation of the bridgeway and restoration? How does this compare to restoration of the dam?
5. Will there be a property tax break to local businesses or reparations for lost business?
6. My not keep the existing pedestrian path and save money. The pedestrian path suggested appears to be very extensive and expensive. What is the cost for this?
7. Are you aware that Stony Creek in Oakland Township removed their dam and the local people are upset because what was free water flow before dam removal resulted in muddy ditches through the township? The local people have been upset. The examples that were in the presentation demonstrated significant larger water volume sourcing such as traverse city.
8. It's hard to believe that the cost of the dam removal, bridgeway and restorations necessary for the entire project are more cost efficient that the cost of restoration of the dam.
9. The pond has been a landmark for many years and will be a sorely missed. It presents an air of local tranquility, fun and beauty.
10. Why not sleeve the existing dam?
11. The long term park area changes appear to be a very expensive project. Who will pay for these other than the taxpayers. The Parks and Recreation Department has been spending a lot of money on buildings, landscaping and purchase of property. Right now the taxpayers are not in a position to keep funding these expensive project.
12. It appears that the decision has already been made regardless of local public opinion. The presentations have presented one side but neglected to provide all the alternatives available and their related costs. I feel like I am dealing with the elitist in Washington DC that seem to take the position of we know better and here is the facts that we think you should know. Where is the transparency and public approval. This should be decided by vote of the taxpayers since it is a very substantial project cost and aesthetic impact.
13. The presentation was beautifully done but really lacked in presenting all the facts and was very narrow in scope. The township should present all the alternatives, fund sources and costs to taxpayers to all the taxpayers in the township by a wide variety of communications and let the people vote on such a substantial project that will have a great impact on the community for decades. We are still a Republic Democracy and the township should go out of its way to saturate the taxpayers with full disclosure of all aspects of the project.

I would appreciate it if all township elected officials were provided this email. I am keeping an open mind about the project but just haven't seen that facts necessary to make an intelligent decision. Right now it appears to me that a decision has been made to go forward because our local officials know what is best for all the taxpayers without full disclosure. This is a dangerous precedent.

Thank You,

Dennis

Appendix B: Survey Instrument

MILL POND DAM

Public Outreach Meeting Survey – page 1

Thank you for your interest in the Mill Pond Dam project! Springfield Township and Oakland County Parks and Recreation have extensively studied options for the dam and ultimately recommended dam removal and restoration of the river corridor. The project is now in the preliminary engineering and conceptual park design phase.

Understanding the priorities of township and county residents will inform project planning and help guide future park development. We appreciate you taking the time to review the preliminary plans and tell us how you use the parks now and what you would like to see as trails and parks are developed and improved.

1. In the past 12 months, how often have you visited MILL POND PARK?

- ☐ Less than once a month
- ☐ 1-3 times a month
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ 2-4 times a week
- ☐ More than 5 times a week
- ☐ I don't visit Mill Pond Park

2. What are the reasons you visit MILL POND PARK (check all that apply)?

- ☐ Walk the trails
- ☐ Fish from the dock
- ☐ Enjoy nature
- ☐ Picnic with friends and family
- ☐ Take photographs
- ☐ Use the playground
- ☐ Visit the Hart Community Center
- ☐ Play court games (tennis, basketball, shuffleboard, horseshoes)
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ I don't visit Mill Pond Park



3. In the past 12 months, how often have you visited ROTARY PARK?

- ☐ Less than once a month
- ☐ 1-3 times a month
- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ 2-4 times a week
- ☐ More than 5 times a week
- ☐ I don't visit Rotary Park

4. What are the reasons you visit ROTARY PARK (check all that apply)?

- ☐ Picnic with friends and family
- ☐ Walk through on my way to somewhere else
- ☐ Take photographs
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ I don't visit Rotary Park

5. What is your home zip code? _____



OAKLAND COUNTY PARKS

Please fill out both sides of survey – Thank you!

Mill Pond Dam Public Outreach Meeting Survey – page 1

6. After reviewing the preliminary plans for the stream corridor, arch culvert and the concepts presented for future improvements to the roadway and Mill Pond Park, how do you rank the following project elements?

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat important	Not important
NATURAL RESOURCES				
Shiawassee River returned to its natural state	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restored stream corridor with native plantings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improved habitat for native wildlife species	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PASSIVE RECREATION				
Pathways, trails, and boardwalks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to the water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nature viewing platforms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Benches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pavilion and picnic sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interpretive signage about history and nature	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ACCESSIBILITY & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY				
Pathways that accommodate strollers, wheelchairs and other mobility devices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pedestrian passage through the culvert, under Davisburg Road	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pathway connection from Mill Pond Park to the Civic Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ACTIVE RECREATION				
Basketball court	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tennis courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pickleball courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shuffleboard courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playground equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Swing sets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DAVISBURG ROAD ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS				
Widened shoulders on roadway over culvert	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curbing on roadway in project area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decorative roadway lighting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COMMUNITY CENTER				
Windows / door walls to provide scenic views	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Patio or deck overlooking stream corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expanded indoor gathering space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Please fill out both sides of survey – Thank you!